

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6855

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 1524

EXDIS

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EG, UK, XF

SUBJECT: MFA OFFICIALS'S VIEW ON POSSIBLE ISRAELI-EGYPTIAN
DISENGAGEMENT

REF: MOSCOW 1323

1. FRENCH EMBOFF TOLD US FEBRUARY 3 THAT MFA DEPUTY CHIEF, NEAR EAST COUNTRIES DEPARTMENT, PYRLIN TOLD OFFICIALS OF FRENCH EMBASSY JANUARY 30 THAT THE USSR BELIEVES THAT A STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND A FURTHER DISENGAGEMENT BETWEEN ISRAEL AND EGYPT MIGHT BE USEFUL AT THIS TIME.

2. PYRLIN QUALIFIED THIS, HOWEVER, BY ASSERTING THAT IN THE SOVIETS' VIEW ANY NEW AGREEMENT SHOULD MEET TWO CONDITIONS. AN ISRAELI-EGYPTIAN DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT SHOULD CLEARLY AND PUBLICLY BE LINKED WITH A RENEWAL OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE, AND IT SHOULD MAKE EXPLICIT REFERENCE TO THE FACT THAT DISENGAGEMENT IS
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ONLY A STEP TOWARD A GENERAL POLITICAL SETTLEMENT IN THE MIDDLE

EAST.

3. COMMENT. PYRLIN'S FAIRLY RELAXED REMAKRKS ON GENEVA RESUMPTION DURING A CONVERSATION ON SAME DAY WITH POLITICAL COULSELOR (REFTEL), ALONG WITH THE ABOVE OBSERVATIONS TO THE FRENCH, SUGGEST THAT THE SOVIETS, ON THE EVE OF GROMYKO'S VISIT TO CAIRO, MAY HAVE DECIDED TO OFFER THEIR ENDORSEMENT OF A NEW ISRAELI-EGYPTIAN DISENGAGEMENT AS BAIT TO THE EGYPTIANS. IF SO, HOWEVER, THAT ENDORSEMENT SEEMS CONDITIONAL ON THE AGREEMENT'S FACILITATING A RETURN TO GENEVA AND ON ITS TAKING ACCOUNT OF THE LONG-STANDING SOVIET VIEW THAT PARTIAL STEPS MUST BE LINKED VISIBLY TO A GENERAL SETTLEMENT.
MATLOCK

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